

THE SHRINE *of* WISDOM

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A DISCOURSE OF HERMES TO HIS SON TAT THAT GOD IS NOT MANIFEST AND YET IS MOST MANIFEST

(1) This Sermon I will make to thee, O Tat, that thou mayest not be without the Mysteries of God, Who is beyond all name. Do thou contemplate in thy Mind (Nous) how That which to the many seems unmanifest, may be most manifest unto thee.

For were It manifest, It would not *be*; because all that is manifest is subject to generation—for it hath been made manifest. But the Unmanifest for ever *is*, and needeth not to be made manifest. It ever is, and maketh other things manifest. Being Himself Unmanifest, as ever-being and ever-making manifest, He Himself is not made manifest nor generated.

He Himself is not brought into being, but in His imagination He imagineth all things. In appearance He maketh them appear, for appearance is only of those things which are generated or made, for appearance is nothing but generation.

He, then, alone, Who is not manifest, nor generated, in His Imagination imagineth all things and maketh them to appear.

(2) In their manifestation He appeareth in all and through all; and especially to those in which He willeth to appear.

Pray therefore first to the Lord and Father, to the Alone and to the One, to be propitious unto thee, in order that thou mayest know and understand so great a God, if but one Ray of Him illumineth thy understanding (noesis: intuition). For noesis alone discerneth that which is not manifest or apparent. If then thou hast this power, O Tat, He will appear to the eyes of thy mind.

The Lord is ungrudging and manifesteth universally. Thou hast the power of grasping thought, of laying hold of it with thine own hands, and thus thou mayest contemplate the Image

of God. But if that which is within thee be not known or apparent unto thee, how shall He Himself in thee be apparent to thee by any outward eyes?

(3) But if thou wouldst see Him, think of the Sun, consider the course of the Moon, consider the order of the Stars. Who is He that maintaineth their order? For all order is bounded in number and place.

The sun is the greatest of the gods in heaven, to whom, as to their ruler, all the gods of heaven give place; and yet he, being such a one, greater than the earth or the sea, is content to have lesser stars circling above him; in reverence and awe of Whom, O Son?

Not like or equal is the course these stars describe in heaven, yet Who hath marked out the manner and greatness of their circling?

(4) The Bear revolveth about its own self and carrieth the whole Cosmos with it. Who is the fashioner of such a work?

Who hath set the bounds of the sea? Who hath established the earth? Some One there must be, O Tat, Who is Maker and Lord of all these things; for it is impossible, O Son, that number, place and measure could be conserved without a Maker; for no Order can be made by disorder and disproportion. If the unordered lacketh something in that it doth not follow the way of order, nevertheless it is under the Maker; although He hath not yet ordained the Order of it.

(5) I would it were possible for thee, O my Son, to become winged, to soar into the air, and poised midway between earth and heaven, to behold the stability of the earth, the fluidity of the sea, the flowing rivers, the spaciousness of the air, the vehemence of fire, the coursing of the stars, and the swiftness of the movement with which the heaven encircleth all.

It were a most blessed sight, my Son, to see all these beneath one sway, the immovable in that which is moved and the unmanifest in that which is to be made manifest; whereby is effected the order of the Cosmos, and the Cosmos of order.

(6) If thou wouldst behold the Creator also, through things mortal, both those on earth and those in the deep, consider, my Son, how man is fashioned in the womb; examine accurately the art of Him Who fashioneth this fair and godly image of man. Who is He that traceth out the circles of the eyes; who He

who pierceth the passages of the nostrils and ears; who He who openeth the portals of the mouth; who He that doth stretch out and tie together the sinews; who He that channelleth the veins; who He that hardeneth the bones; who He who covereth the flesh with skin; who He who separateth the fingers and the joints; who is He that shapeth the broad surfaces of the soles of the feet; who is He who diggeth the ducts; who is He who spreadeth out the spleen; who is He who shapeth the heart like a pyramid; who is He who setteth the ribs together; who is He who maketh the liver broad; who is He that maketh the lungs like a sponge; who is He who maketh the belly capacious; who is He who doth make prominent the more honourable parts, but concealeth the less seemly?

(7) Behold how many arts have been employed on one material, and how many works within one compass, and all exceedingly beautiful and in perfect measure, and yet all differing. Who hath made all these things? What mother or what father? Who but the hidden God Who hath wrought all these things by His own Will?

(8) No one saith that a statue or a picture cometh into being without a sculptor or a painter; and hath such a work as this come into being without a Maker? What depth of blindness, what deep impiety, what depth of ignorance!

Never, O Tat my Son, canst thou deprive the Creator of His creation, for He is greater than all names, so great is He, the Father of all. For verily He is the Only One, and His work is to be the Father.

(9) And if you compel me to speak with boldness, I will say that it is His very Essence to be pregnant of all things and to bring them into existence. And as without a maker it is impossible that anything should be made, so too it needs must be that He is not, if He maketh not ever all things in heaven, in the air, in the earth, in the deep, in the whole Cosmos, and in all that is and is not. For in all this there is nothing that He is not. He is Himself both the things that are, and the things that are not; for the things that are, He hath made manifest, but the things that are not, He keepeth in Himself.

(10) He is God beyond all name; He is the Unmanifest; He is the Most Manifest; He Whom the Nous alone can contemplate, yet He Whom the eyes may behold; He Who is Incor-

poreal and yet Multi-corporeal—nay rather of every body, for there is nothing which He is not. For all are He, and He alone is All. And for this reason He hath all names, in that He is the One Father; and because He is the One Father, He hath no name, for He is the Father of all.

Who, then, may sing Thee praise, of Thee, or to Thee? Whither, again, may I turn mine eyes to hymn Thee; above, below, within, without? There is no way, no place is there about Thee, nor any other thing of things that are. All are in Thee: all are from Thee, O Thou Who givest all and takest nothing: for Thou hast all, and naught is there Thou hast not.

(11) When, O Father, shall I praise Thee? For none can seize Thine hour or time.

Concerning what, also, shall I hymn Thee? For what Thou hast made, or for what Thou hast not made? For what thou hast manifested, or for what Thou hast not manifested?

Wherefore, how shall I hymn Thee? As being of myself; as having something of mine own; as being another? For Thou art whatever I may be; Thou art whatever I may do; Thou art whatever I may speak. For Thou art All and there is nothing else that Thou art not. Thou art Thou; all that is made and all that is not made; Nous when Thou thinkest; Father when Thou makest; the Good when Thou workest.

SUFFICIENCY AND THE GOOD

Perfect sufficiency is inherent in The Good on account of the simplicity of His subsistence; since this is with Him the same thing as to be The Good Itself: for He is not The Good and something else, but this very thing and this alone, The Good Itself. So that He is The One, because His nature is not composed from The Good and something else: for if this were the case we should be in want of another Principle in which good would not be mingled with any other nature, but would be perfectly pure.

—*Thomas Taylor.*

THE MYTH OF IO

WITH A SUGGESTED INTERPRETATION

OUTLINE OF THE MYTH

The ancient city of Argos was sacred to Hera, for to its first king, the God Inachus, son of Oceanus and Tethys, from whom was named the city's river, the Goddess Rhea had entrusted the guardianship of her daughter Hera while Zeus, her son, warred against the Titans.

After the victory of Zeus, Hera, now his queen in Olympus, gave to Argos her special protection, and the temple Inachus had built in her honour was served by her priestesses, the king's daughters, one of whom was the beautiful Io.

Zeus, who loved the maiden Io, sent to her dreams in which she heard voices telling her to go forth to the meadow by the spring Lerna beyond the city to meet the king of Gods.

Troubled by the voices and unwilling to obey them, Io confided in her father who, after consulting many times the Oracle at Delphi, and receiving enigmatic replies, was at last clearly told that Io must be sent far away from Argos, or the land would be destroyed by Zeus. Inachus dared not disobey the command, and Io was sent forth alone.

On reaching the spring of Lerna, Io was met by Hera who in anger changed her into a white heifer. Then, lest Zeus should take the heifer, Hera set over her as guard the giant Argus-Panoptes, the all-seeing, the hundred-eyed, who when fifty of his eyes were closed, kept watch with the other fifty.

To the rescue of Io, Zeus despatched Hermes who charmed Argus to sleep with the music of his pipe and then struck off his head and released the heifer. But Hera, seeing what was done, sent a gad-fly to torment the animal which, maddened by the sting, fled through many lands and across the sea, pursued by the gad-fly. In her wanderings she came to the rock to which Prometheus was chained and, at rest for a moment from the terrible sting, she asked him what country she had reached.

Prometheus told her of further journeying ahead, and of the happiness awaiting her at its end. Even as he had said, she was driven again upon her way, crossing rivers and mountains,

avoiding monsters against which he had warned her, receiving help in other lands, until at last she reached the source of the sacred Nile and followed its course to the land of Egypt. Here, as she stayed to drink and rest, Zeus appeared before her and, in answer to her plea, touched her side, restoring her to her true form. Then he told Io that her sorrows were ended, for she should be immortal and be honoured in Egypt as the queen of Zeus. A son Epaphus, "the touch-born," should be born to her and in the course of time his posterity should reign in Argos.

VARIATIONS OF THE MYTH

The outline given is taken chiefly from the *Prometheus Bound* of Aeschylus. The parentage of Io varies in different versions of the myth, but in all accounts is in direct descent from Inachus and his son Phoroneus who was said to have given to mankind the knowledge of fire and the first forms of social life. Io is also said to be related to Zeus.

In certain versions Zeus is said to have transformed Io into a heifer when surprised by Hera who penetrated his disguise of clouds. Hera then asked for the heifer which, in order to allay her suspicion, was given to her. The journey is variously described, and the lands, mountains and seas traversed as well as the general directions indicated—West, North, East and South—have their significance.

SUGGESTED INTERPRETATION

Persons of the myth:

Rhea, mother of Zeus and Hera, and Queen of Kronos.

Zeus, King of Olympus and Father of mankind.

Hera, Queen of Olympus and Mother of mankind.

Hermes, Messenger of the Gods.

Oceanus and Tethys, Rulers of all oceans and waters, and hence of the mystical "Sea of Generation."

Inachus, a God, son of Oceanus and Tethys, and king of Argos.

Io, daughter of Inachus, and priestess of the temple of Hera.

Argus-Panoptes, the all-seeing, a giant of the Titanic race.

Io, as the priestess of Hera's temple and the daughter of a God closely related to the rulers of oceans which symbolize the

natural and physical realms with their rhythmic changes and incessant motion, typifies the innocent soul as a child of God which has come into bodily existence in the world of time and space.

The destiny of the soul is to fulfil the purpose implanted in it by Divine Love, and the dream voices heard by Io represent the soul's dawning awareness of that purpose.

The reluctance of Io to obey the voices suggests the soul's choice to identify itself with its natural impulses and desires and to ignore its inner spiritual promptings.

The banishment of Io in obedience to the Oracle stands for the inevitable consequence of this choice through which the soul becomes self-exiled from communion with that which is Divine.

The anger of Hera represents the difficulties encountered by the soul (not only when it is completely preoccupied with temporal interests, but also when it begins to seek truth) which provide the soul with the means for developing its inherent God-given powers.

The white heifer symbolizes the irrational and physical nature, pure in itself, but which, when dominating the reason, lowers the human dignity to the level of a brute.

The many-eyed guard, Argus-Panoptes, ever wakeful, may be regarded as signifying the many energies of the soul for which the physical realm is the field, and hence the soul's preoccupation with temporal activities which hinders it from following that which is ideal. Hera, as the cause of the soul's life, sends it forth into the objective world with the means for learning to fulfil its purpose, but while enslaved by the attractions of material existence, these means are misused.

The sleeping of the eyes of Argus accordingly suggest the turning of the soul from externals towards that which is within itself. The slaying of Argus by Hermes, bringer of Divine Truth, will thus represent the conversion of the soul to a more unified vision which will lead to the desire for something higher than has as yet been known.

The gad-fly may be said to symbolize the inner urge of the spirit manifested in the tormenting doubts and inner restlessness of the soul which in its own way is seeking truth, but has not as yet entered upon the path of obedience to the Divine Will.

The encounter with Prometheus (who, as the bearer of the Divine Fire to mankind, represents the Divine Immanence, the Inner Lord) symbolizes the soul's choice to rely upon the Divine Guidance and obey the Divine Will. In answer to its call, the soul receives guidance, help, and knowledge of its true destiny, represented by the counsels and promises given by Prometheus, and continues its search in a more intelligent manner.

After this encounter Io was again irresistibly driven onward by the sting of the gad-fly, which here appears to signify the incessant urge of the Spirit that enables the soul to persist in its quest regardless of the obstacles upon the way, and to receive consciously the Divine aid.

The final stage of the journey, from the source of the Nile along its course to the sacred land of Egypt, signifies the following of an ideal and spiritual path which leads to the consummation of union with the Divine.

The waters of the Nile were said to have characteristic health-giving properties, and the final rest and refreshment of Io and the appearance to her of Zeus symbolize the soul's restitution to wholeness and its realization of the Divine Presence. The restoration of Io to human form by the Divine Touch similarly represents the soul's union with God and its full attainment of perfection; while the future happiness and rulership promised by Zeus, and the birth of Epaphus, signify the new life of the soul which, with reason enthroned and consciously united to the Divine Will, is destined to govern and harmonize its own lower nature, while having as its progeny the great thoughts and ideal works of service to God and humanity which are the fruits of the highest virtue.

It is worthy of note that Epaphus was said to be an ancestor of the heroes Hercules and Perseus, a symbolical indication of one of the ideal purposes which may be accomplished by the soul—namely, the liberation of its fellows.

A natural interpretation of the myth is also given, according to which Io was a name of the moon in Argos. This represents Zeus as the sun; Io, the heifer with curved horns, as the wandering moon; and Argus as the starry night sky. Hera, as queen of day, was in natural opposition to Io as the moon, queen of night.

THE MESSAGE OF THE ALVARs

The Alvars are the Vaisnava Poet-Saints of South India, who did much to re-kindle in that land the dying flame of God-love.

They are twelve in number, but it is difficult to ascertain authentic facts concerning them, for legends have gathered around their names to such an extent that it is impossible to distinguish clearly between legendary narratives and historic records.

Most of them are said to have flourished between the seventh and ninth centuries A.D., but several early pioneers are believed to have lived before the Christian era.

Their names are variously given in different accounts. The three earliest of them are known as Poygai Alvar, Boodhath-alvar, and Peyalvar.

The word *Alvar* is of Tamil origin. It signifies one who is immersed in God-love; one who has penetrated into the depths of his being; one who is lost in rapturous devotion to the Supreme Lord. It is therefore more or less descriptive of all "God-intoxicated" men, although especially applied to these twelve outstanding figures.

The Alvars belonged to all classes of society; four of them were orthodox Brahmans; one was an outcaste. All of them were members of a Divine society beyond the barriers of caste and creed, forming, as it were, a separate caste of soldiers of Truth and servants of God. They were wholly dominated by a passionate desire for union with their Lord.

It matters not that so little is known of their lives, for the priceless treasure of their immortal songs has been preserved for humanity. Four thousand of these hymns are contained in the *Divya Prabandham*, many of which are still sung by the Vaisnavas, both in their homes and in the temple worship. They are songs of praise, torrents of devotion, mystic outpourings of rapturous love.

"Hungering for Thee," cries Thiru Mangai, "many a strange web of life have I woven for ages"; and, again, "I have found in Thee the balm and bliss of life." Another sings: "My tongue shall glorify Him alone, the Master of the universe! My eyes shall see Him alone and my ears shall listen to His glory alone.

My mind shall think of Him and my heart shall feel Him alone.” Kula Sekara exclaims: “True, there is a wild madness in me, but it is the inebriation of a God intoxicated soul.” Nammalvar says: “God is the bread of our souls, the water of our life, and the light and joy of our existence.” Their voice is the self-same voice with which the saints and sages of all lands and times have sought to give utterance to their inexpressible longing for the Divine.

Like all true mystics, the Alvars were responsive to the Divine Spark within them. In the realization of their own deathlessness they were able to defy death. Thiruv Alluvar exclaims triumphantly: “It is death that is dead before the might of Him who has subdued death.” Nammalvar speaks exultantly of death as “lying dead amid the ruins of hell.” Appar challenges death in the words: “I have sought shelter in Him Who is our only shield and armour. Death I can laugh to scorn.” Thiru Mangai sings: “Age cannot wither, nor can time leave its furrows on the birthless one, out of whom doth flow, in ceaseless measure, a stream of joy beyond words. In Him there is neither ‘was’ nor ‘is’ nor ‘will be,’ but all throbs with one voice of eternity. Into that vast sea of the unknown I have dived, the fitful fever of life passing away.”

These saintly souls beheld all things in the light of the Divine. The world was seen mystically by them to be the cosmic body of God. Their perception of the Unity behind all existence showed them that the sage and the worm manifested God in different forms. They saw God in everything and identified themselves with the whole creation. They could “wander with the clouds, soar with the hills, dance with the waves and laugh with the flowers.”

This vision of Divine Unity led to a rapt communion transcending prayer and praise. In these moments of ecstasy the seeker and the sought, the knower and the known, became one.

The message of the Alvars resembles that of the Upanishadic Rishis in affirming that the Home of God is not only in the starry heavens but also in the heart of man. Perialvar says: “Build in your heart a temple for the Lord and for ever worship Him there. Offer at His altar your humble flowers of love and sacrifice.” Thiru Mangai exhorts: “Sin not against your sacred self. . . . I have known the measureless and searchable One

Whom sages worship in the silent shrine of their being. To be unwearied in the service of the Lord that dwells in me is the work for which I am born." Thiru Mazhi-Sai cries: "Close all the doors of the senses and kindle within the torch of knowledge. Luminous as a long unbroken trail of light there gleams upon your vision a path to the hidden temple of our Lord, the bolts and bars of whose gates yield only to the magic touch of love."

Like other spiritual teachers, the Alvars have resorted to parables and allegories to reveal the mysteries of life, using familiar objects as symbols to convey to others something of their ineffable experience of Reality. Appar says: "Delicious as the breath of May, soft as the whisper of the south wind, great as the throb of the well-tuned lyre, mellow as the gleam of the twilight moon, steals into me the Spirit of the Lord." Andal, a sister Alvar, relates: "I dreamed a sweet dream. In a lovely bower, under a pearl-inwrought canopy, I saw my Lord clasp me in His arms." Another speaks of God as "The Husbandman of our hearts." Nammalvar says that "in the cloistral stillness of the night I looked up and across the sky I saw His message written in letters of gold." The dark night of the soul is thus described by one of them: "Rocked into a deep sleep the world lies still, and darkness, vast as the sea, has gathered around me. In the wilderness of night I am all alone. Who will sustain me in my sorrow if my Lover cometh not?"

These spiritual leaders have approached Reality from all- various aspects; they have touched manifold phases of life divine and have given expression to many forms of spiritual experience. Nammalvar, who is one of their greatest mystics and who represents several types of mysticism, says: "Many are the paths that lead to His shrine. He steals amongst us in many a strange form and guise. Let me but hear his whisper amidst the din and tumult of the warring sects and creeds of the world." Thiru Valluvar pictures a home governed by "the rule of love and sacrifice," and he expresses the opinion that it is from the love of home that the priceless jewel of the brotherhood of man is made manifest.

The Naisvana teachings stress the need for self-effacement. Nammalvar exhorts: "Lay the axe to the root of 'Thou' and 'Thine' and take refuge in thy Maker. There is no other way to

emerge from life's trifles." "Change all other desires in us into this unique aspiration to be Thy humble servitors," is the prayer of Andal.

The Alvars, being mystic poets, have fittingly chosen verse as their medium of expression. They may be likened to sensitive instruments that vibrate rhythmically into endless melodies beneath the touch of an unseen hand. "Thou makest me a reed," sings one of them, "and breathest through me the songs of Thy mysteries." They have consecrated their poetic gift "to open the immortal eyes of man to worlds of thought—to eternity." Nammalvar sings: I defile not my muse by burning incense at the shrine of man, for I am a poet in the Court of the Lord."

The appeal of their songs is both individual and universal: individual, as being an expression of a vision peculiar to the poet; universal, since by his flaming intensity the poet makes his vision to live in others. In this and in their spontaneity lies much of their charm. It is, however, the essentially religious character of the songs that makes the strongest appeal. They reveal the Alvars' mystic conception of religion and of God. Their religion is one of worship, acquiescence, love and, above all, selfless service.

To the Alvars every object is one of veneration, for everything is essentially divinely holy. Every sod of earth is sacred, and the whole universe is a vast Temple of God. Nammalvar sings: "The voice of my Beloved rolls through all things and is heard in every wind and wave. There is not a crevice or cranny that does not ring with His tread. Vast as the earth I see Him in a grain of sand, and boundless as the deep I see Him in the spray of the sea." Therefore "they dwell in a thousand-eyed Temple of God; every hour is a Sabbath; their gifts, peace-offerings; their conversation, a communion; their silence, a prayer."

The theme of the message of the Alvars breathes the spirit of Prayer and Self-surrender: these are the corner-stones of their doctrine. To them, self-surrender is not a passivity like the stillness of the grave, but rather an active doing of the Will of God, Who works through His devotees to accomplish His Will on earth, seeking ever to manifest Himself through them. Prayer is the result of an awareness of the Omnipresence of a

Beneficent Power Which, having created man, provides for all his needs. It leads to an active response which strives unceasingly against evil, strong in the faith in the Divine Power Which transmutes all discord into harmony, all error into truth, all pain into joy.

EXTRACTS FROM JALÁLU-'D-DÍN RUMI

Love depends not on outward form or face,
 Whatever is beloved is not a mere empty form,
 Whether your beloved be of the earth or of heaven.
 Whatever outward form you come to love—
 Why do you forsake it the moment life leaves it?
 The form is still there; whence then this disdain of it?
 Ah! lover, consider well what is really your beloved.
 If a thing perceived by the outward senses is the beloved,
 Then all who retain their senses must still love it;
 And since love increases constancy,
 How can constancy fail while form abides?
 But the truth is, the sun's beams strike the wall
 And the wall only reflects that borrowed light.
 Why give your heart to mere stones, O simpleton?
 Go! seek the Source of Light which shineth alway!

He gave me gold, but Thou my hand which counts it;
 He gave me a horse, but Thou my reason to guide it;
 He gave me a light, but Thou my lucid eyes; . . .
 He gave me a pension, but Thou my life and being;
 His gift was gold, but Thine true blessings;
 He gave me a house, but Thou heaven and earth.

When the light of Allah illumines his mind,
 A man is no longer a slave to effects.
 When love of God kindles a flame in his heart,
 He burns, and is freed from effects.
 He has no need of signs to assure him of Love.

THE ASCENT TO THE INEFFABLE

FROM *A Dissertation on the Philosophy of Aristotle*

BY THOMAS TAYLOR*

There is also another mode which does not place the undigent before the indigent but considers that which is indigent of a more excellent nature, as subsisting secondary to that which is more excellent.

Everywhere, then, that which is in capacity is secondary to that which is in energy, in order that it may proceed into energy; and that it may not remain in capacity in vain, it requires that which is in energy. For the more excellent never blossoms from the subordinate nature. Let this, then, be previously defined by us, according to common unperverted conceptions. Matter, therefore, has, prior to itself, material form; because all matter is form in capacity, whether it be the first matter which is perfectly formless, or the second which subsists according to body void of quality, or, in other words, mere triple extension, to which it is likely those directed their attention who first investigated sensibles, and which at first appeared to be the only thing that had a subsistence. For the existence of that which is common in the different elements, persuaded them that there is a certain body void of quality.

But since among bodies of this kind some possess the governing principle inwardly, and others externally, such as things artificial, it is necessary besides quality to direct our attention to nature, as something better than qualities, and which is prearranged in the order of cause, as art is of things artificial. Of things, however, which are inwardly governed, some appear to possess being alone, but others to be nourished and increased, and to generate things similar to themselves.

There is, therefore, another certain cause prior to the above-mentioned nature, namely, a vegetative power itself. But it is evident that all such things as are ingenerated in body as in a subject, are of themselves incorporeal, though they become corporeal by the participation of that in which they subsist, so that they are said to be and are material in consequence of what

* For Part I, see *Shrine of Wisdom*, No. 109.

they suffer from matter. Qualities, therefore, and still more natures, and in a still greater degree the vegetative life, preserve the incorporeal in themselves.

Since, however, sense exhibits another more conspicuous life, pertaining to beings which are moved according to impulse and place, this must be established prior to that, as being a more proper principle, and as the supplier of a certain better form, and that of a self-moved animal, and which naturally precedes plants rooted in the earth. The animal, however, is not accurately self-moved. For the whole is not such through the whole; but a part moves, and a part is moved. This, therefore, is the apparent self-moved.

Hence, prior to this, it is necessary there should be that which is truly self-moved, and which according to the whole of itself moves and is moved, that the apparently self-moved may be the image of this. And indeed the soul which moves the body must be considered as a more proper self-moved essence. This, however, is twofold, the one rational and the other irrational. For that there is a rational soul is evident. Or has not everyone a co-sensation of himself, more clear or more obscure, when converted to himself in the attentions to and investigations of himself, and in the vital and gnostic animadversions of himself? For the essence which is capable of this, and which can collect universals by reasoning, will very justly be rational.

The irrational soul, also, though it does not appear to investigate these things, and to reason with itself, yet at the same time moves bodies from place to place, being itself previously moved from itself; for at different times it exerts a different impulse. Does it, therefore, move itself from one impulse to another? or is it moved by something else, as for instance, by the whole rational soul in the universe? But it would be absurd to say, that the energies of every irrational soul are not the energies of that soul itself, but of one more divine, since they are relatively infinite, and mingled with much of the base and imperfect. For this would be just the same as to say that the irrational energies are the energies of the rational soul. I omit to mention the absurdity of supposing that the whole essence is not generative of its proper energies. For if the irrational soul is a certain essence, it will have peculiar energies of its own, not imparted from something else, but proceeding from itself. The

irrational soul, therefore, will also move itself, and at different times to different impulses. But if it moves itself, it will be converted to itself. If, however, this be the case, it will have a separate subsistence, and will not be in a subject. It is, therefore, rational if it looks to itself; for in being converted to, it surveys itself. For when extended to things external, it looks to externals, or rather looks to coloured body, but does not see itself, because sight itself is neither body nor that which is coloured. Hence, it does not revert to itself. Neither, therefore, is this the case with any other irrational nature. For neither does the phantasy project a type of itself, but of that which is sensible, as for instance of coloured body. Nor does irrational appetite desire itself, but aspires after a certain object of desire, such as honour, or pleasure, or riches. It does not, therefore, move itself.

But if some one, on seeing that brutes exert certain lower rational energies, should apprehend that these also participate of the first self-moved, and on this account possess a soul converted to itself, it may, perhaps, be granted to him that these also are rational natures, except that they are not so essentially, but according to a most obscure participation, just as the rational soul may be said to be intellectual according to participation, as always projecting common conceptions without distortion.

It must, however, be observed that the extremes are: that which is capable of being perfectly separated, such as the rational form, and that which is perfectly inseparable, such as corporeal quality, and that in the middle of these nature subsists, which verges to the inseparable, having a small representation of the separable, and the irrational soul which verges to the separable; for it appears in a certain respect to subsist by itself, separate from a subject; so that it becomes doubtful whether it is self-motive or alter-motive. For it contains an abundant vestige of self-motion, but not that which is true, and converted to itself, and on this account perfectly separated from a subject. And the vegetable soul* has in a certain respect a middle subsistence. On this account, to some of the ancients it appeared to be a certain soul, but to others, nature.

Again, therefore, that we may return to the proposed object

* The formative principle of vegetable existences.

of investigation, how can a self-motive nature of this kind, which is mingled with the alter-motive, be the first principle of things? For it neither subsists from itself nor does it in reality perfect itself; but it requires a certain other nature both for its subsistence and perfection. And prior to it is that which is truly self-moved.

Is, therefore, that which is properly self-moved the principle, and is it indigent of no form more excellent than itself? Or is not that which always moves naturally prior to that which is moved; and in short, does not every form which is pure from its contrary subsist by itself prior to that which is mingled with it? And is not the pure the cause of the co-mingled? For that which is co-essentialized with another has also an energy mingled with that other. So that a self-moved nature will indeed make itself; but thus subsisting it will be at the same time moving and moved, but will not be made a moving nature only, for neither is it this alone.

Every form, however, is always alone according to its first subsistence; so that there will be that which moves only, without being moved. And indeed it would be absurd that there should be that which is moved only, such as body, but that prior both to that which is self-moved and that which is moved only, there should not be that which moves only. For it is evident that there must be, since this will be a more excellent nature, and that which is self-moved is more excellent, in so far as it moves itself, than in so far as it is moved.

It is necessary, therefore, that the essence which moves unmoved should be first, as that which is moved, not being motive, is the third, in the middle of which is the self-moved, which we say requires that which moves in order to its becoming motive. In short, if it is moved, it will not abide, so far as it is moved; and if it moves, it is necessary it should *remain* moving so far as it moves. Whence, then, does it derive the power of *abiding*? For from itself it derives the power either of being moved only, or of at the same time abiding and being moved wholly according to the same. Whence, then, does it simply obtain the power of abiding? Certainly from that which simply abides. But this is an immovable cause. We must, therefore, admit that the immovable is prior to the self-moved.

Let us consider then if the immovable is the most proper

principle. But how is this possible? For the immovable contains as numerous a multitude immovably as the self-moved self-movably. Besides, an immovable separation must necessarily subsist prior to a self-movable separation. The unmoved, therefore, is at the same time one and many, and is at the same time united and separated; and a nature of this kind is denominated intellect. But it is evident that the united in this is naturally prior to and more honourable than the separated. For separation is always indigent of union; but not, on the contrary, union of separation. Intellect, however, has not the united pure from its opposite; for intellectual form is co-essentialized with the separated through the whole of itself. Hence, that which is in a certain respect united requires that which is simply united; that which subsists with another is indigent of that which subsists by itself; and that which subsists according to participation, of that which subsists according to essence. For intellect, being self-subsistent, produces itself as united and at the same time separated. Hence it subsists according to both these. It is produced, therefore, from that which is simply united and alone united.

Prior, therefore, to that which is formal is the uncircumscribed and undistributed into forms. And this is that which we call the united, and which the wise men of antiquity denominated *being*, possessing in one contraction multitude subsisting prior to the many.

Having, therefore, arrived thus far, let us here rest awhile, and consider with ourselves whether being is the investigated principle of all things; for what can there be which does not participate of being? May we not say that this, if it is the united, will be secondary to *the One*, and that by participating of *the One* it becomes the united? But, in short, if we conceive *the One* to be something different from being, if being is prior to *the One* it will not participate of *the One*. It will, therefore, be many only, and these will be infinitely infinites.

But if *the One* is with *being* and *being* with *the One*, and they are either co-ordinate or divided from each other, there will be two principles, and the above-mentioned absurdity will happen. Or they will mutually participate of each other, and there will be two elements. Or they are parts of something else consisting from both. And if this be the case, what will that be which leads

them to union with each other? For if *the One* unites being to Itself (for this may be said) *the One* also will energize prior to being, and It may call forth and convert being to Itself. *The One*, therefore, will subsist from Itself self-perfect prior to being.

Farther still, the more simple is always prior to the more composite. If, therefore, they are similarly simple, there will either be two principles or one from the two, and this will be a composite. Hence the simple and perfectly incomposite is prior to this, which must be either one or not one; and if not one, it must either be many or nothing. But with respect to nothing, if it signifies that which is perfectly void, it will signify something vain. But if it signifies the arcane, this will not even be that which is simple.

In short, we cannot conceive any principle more simple than *the One*. *The One*, therefore, is in every respect prior to *being*. Hence this is the principle of all things, and Plato, recurring to this, did not require any other principle in his reasonings. For the arcane, in which this our ascent terminates, is not the principle of reasoning, nor of knowledge, nor of animals, nor of beings, nor of unities, but simply of all things, being arranged above every conception and conjecture that we can frame. Hence Plato indicates nothing concerning It, but makes his negations of all other things except *the One* from *the One*. For that *the One is*, he denies in the last place, but he does not make a negation of *the One*. He also, besides this, even denies this negation, but not *the One*. He denies, too, name, and conception, and all knowledge, and what can be said more, whole itself and every being. But let there be the united and the unical, and, if you will, the two principles *bound* and *the infinite*. Plato, however, never in any respect makes a negation of *the One* which is beyond all these. Hence in the *Sophista* he considers It as *the One* prior to being, and in the *Republic* as *the Good* beyond every essence; but at the same time *the One* alone is left.

(Conclusion)

God is the friend of those who believe. He takes them out of darkness into the light.

—Koran

EXTRACTS FROM HAFIZ OF SHIRAZ*

Why fix thy heart^{*} upon this frail abode?
 When gone, thou never shalt retrace thy road.
 To place thy trust there were the madman's part,
 And he who loves it has an alien's heart.
 Within this fabric of six doors[†] we miss
 A tenement of ease, a place of bliss.
 Saki,[‡] that fire-like water I desire,
 I crave that water to be freed from fire.§
 This heart enlightened with a fire is tried,
 Extinguished only by this water's tide.
 Saki, that ruby-tinted dew we seek
 That pales the amethyst and ruby's cheek,
 Oh, let that water of the fountain run,
 Not flowing water, but a moving sun.
 Above the nine steps of the five-fold sphere,||
 One cup of wine my quadrate house shall rear;
 Above those pillarless nine zones to soar,
 I shall be shackled by myself no more.
 Arise! if rational; in inspiration trust.
 O Saki, give me that imperial bowl
 Which opes the heart, exhilarates the soul.
 By "bowl" I image the eternal wine,
 By "wine" I signify vision divine.
 As Yaman's lightning-flash our youth-time dies,
 And life as morning's East-wind swiftly flies.
 At one this mansion of six doors eschew,
 And bid this dragon of nine heads ¶ adieu.

* Translated from the Persian.

† The World, considered as cube with its six sides.

‡ Cup-bearer.

§ Water symbolizes spiritual life: fire—desire.

|| The "nine steps" may be regarded as symbolizing nine stages on the pathway to the Celestial realms. The five-fold sphere as the earth with its four quarters and centre.

¶ This may perhaps be interpreted as representing a nine-fold attachment to material existence.

Thy gold, thy being, for the Path resign,
 Count life as nothing, if the Path be thine.
 Haste onward to the Lasting Mansion, haste;
 And know that all, excepting God, must waste.

It is a crime to seek to raise but self,
 Before all other men to praise but self;
 The pupil of the eye a lesson gives:
 Be all submitted to thy gaze but self.

Opportunity flies, O brother,
 As the cloud that quick doth pass:
 Oh, make use of it! life is precious:
 If we let it go—alas!

Let not thy heart the world's vain goods pursue,
 For no one yet has found her promise true.
 No stingless honey in her mart we buy,
 No thornless dates her garden will supply.
 If lamp she lights, as soon as it grows bright,
 The wind extinguishes the spreading light.
 Who careless doth his heart on her bestow,
 Behold, he cherishes a deadly foe!

JEWEL

O God, in every temple I see people that seek Thee, and in every language spoken people praise Thee.

Each religion teaches that Thou art One without equal.

If it be a mosque, people utter the holy prayer;

If it be a Christian church, people ring the bells for love to Thee.

Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister, and sometimes the mosque.

But it is Thou Whom I seek from temple to temple.

Thine elect are above heresy and orthodoxy.

—Akbar.

THE ELEMENTS OF THEOLOGY

PROCLUS*

Proposition CCVII

The vehicle of every partial soul is fabricated by an immovable cause

For if it is perpetually and connascently suspended from the soul that uses it, being immutable according to essence, it is allotted its hypostasis from an immovable cause; for every thing which is generated from movable causes is essentially changed. Moreover every soul has a perpetual body which primarily participates of it. Hence, the cause of a partial soul, and therefore of its vehicle, is immovable, and on this account supermundane.

Proposition CCVIII

The vehicle of every partial soul is immaterial, essentially indivisible, and impassive

For if it proceeds from an immovable fabrication, and is perpetual, it will have an immaterial and impassive hypostasis. For such things as are adapted to suffer essentially and to be changed are all of them material and, in consequence of subsisting differently at different times, are suspended from movable causes. Hence, likewise, they receive an all-various mutation, being moved in conjunction with their principal causes.

Moreover, that this vehicle is indivisible, is manifest. For every thing which is divided, so far as it is divided, is corrupted, in consequence of departing from the whole, and from its continuity. If, therefore, it is essentially immutable and impassive, it will be indivisible.

Proposition CCIX

The vehicle of every partial soul descends indeed with the addition of more material vestments, but becomes united to the soul by an ablation of every thing material, and a recurrence to its proper form, analogous to the soul that uses it

* For previous sections, see *Shrine of Wisdom*, Nos. 56 to 109.

For this soul indeed descends irrationally, assuming irrational lives; but it ascends, laying aside all the generation-producing powers with which it was invested in its descent and, becoming pure, returns to the pristine condition of its nature. For the vehicle imitates the lives of the souls that use it, and they being everywhere moved, it is moved in conjunction with them. By its circulations likewise it represents the intellections of some souls; but the falling of others through their inclination to the realms of generation; and the purifications of others through the circumductions which lead to an immaterial nature. For because it is vivified by the very essence of souls and is con-nascent with them, it is all-variously changed in conjunction with their energies; follows them everywhere; becomes co-passive with them; is restored to its pristine state together with them when they are purified; is elevated when they are elevated, and aspires after its own perfection. For every thing is perfected when it obtains its proper perfection.

Proposition CCX

Every connascent vehicle of the soul always possesses both the same figure and magnitude. But it is seen to be greater and less, and of a dissimilar figure, through the additions and ablations of other bodies

For if it derives its essence from an immovable cause, it is evident that both its figure and its magnitude are defined by this cause, and each is immutable and invariable. Moreover, at different times it appears to be different, as likewise greater and less. Hence, through other bodies added from the material elements, and again taken away, it exhibits a different appearance both in quantity and form.

Proposition CCXI

Every partial soul descending into generation descends wholly; nor does one part of it remain on high, and another part descend

For if something pertaining to the soul remains on high in the intelligible world, it will always perceive intellectually, without transition or transitively. But if without transition, it will be intellect, and not a part of the soul, and this partial soul

will proximately participate of intellect. This, however, is impossible. But if it perceives intellectually with transition, from that which always and from that which sometimes energizes intellectually, one essence will be formed. This, however, also is impossible, for these always differ, as has been demonstrated. To which may be added, the absurdity resulting from supposing that the summit of the soul is always perfect, and yet does not rule over the other powers and cause them to be perfect. Every partial soul, therefore, wholly descends.

(Conclusion)

DIVINE JUSTICE

But they who, because judgment is not presently executed upon the ungodly, blame the management of things as faulty, and Providence as defective, are like such spectators of a dramatic poem, as when wicked and injurious persons are brought upon the stage, for a while swaggering and triumphing; impatiently cry out against the dramatist, and presently condemn the plot: whereas if they would but expect the winding up of things, and stay till the last close, they should then see them come off with shame and sufficient punishment. The evolution of the world, as Plotinus calls it, is . . . a truer poem, and we men histrionical actors upon the stage, who notwithstanding insert something of our own into the poem too; but God Almighty is that Skilful Dramatist, who always connecteth that of ours which went before, with that of His which follows after, into good coherent sense; and will at last make it appear, that a thread of exact justice did run through all, and that rewards and punishments are measured out in geometrical proportion.

—*Ralph Cudworth.*